IMPROVING TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS THROUGH

STUDENT MOTIVATION IN MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Despite the fact that today everyone is keen to opt for higher education in general and a management degree in particular; the teaching-learning process in higher education seems to be legging behind the ideal. As the heterogeneous classroom fraternity in a typical higher education classroom presents a challenge to the teacher, the indispensable prerequisite of effective teaching-learning process – *students'/participants' motivation/interest to learn*; is not given due attention. In absence of an adequate interest and motive for learning, the Gen-Next students experience motivational problems that demand careful attention and concern. Considering the diversity amongst these students, one cannot expect to have a standardized across-the-board approach to deal with all the motivational problems. But, having direct bearing on the effectiveness of the teaching-learning process, igniting and ensuring student motivation has become the need-of-the-hour. In the light of these concerns, this conceptual paper highlights the likely causes of lack of student motivation and discusses the way-outs to be adopted by the teachers to serve as motivators for these budding leaders; and thereby improve the teaching-learning process in higher education in general, and management education in particular. Analyzing the plethora of available literature with a practical orientation and clubbing it with the real life teaching experience, the authors have tried to unearth the concern areas of ensuring student motivation in higher education, especially in management programmes, and emphasized the need that every teacher should learn to spot the tendencies of human nature and then incorporate these insights during the teaching-learning process; to make it more fruitful for all the concerned.

KEYWORDS: Gen-Next Management Students, Higher Education, Human Nature, Learning, Management Education, Student Motivation, Teaching-Learning Process

INTRODUCTION

As rightly echoed by the strongest pillars sort of youth brigade of our *"Youngest Nation of the World"* in the Gen Y Discussion Forum on *"What kind of higher education I dream for India?"* in the 44 (2) issue of the Indian Journal of Training and Development in April-June, 2014; the higher education system in India certainly needs a revamp. Higher education in general, and management education in particular are facing sever criticisms from all corners on matters concerning theoretical v/s practical orientation, industry-academia partnership, effectiveness of teaching-learning process, so on and so forth (Young Writers' Forum, 2014). One such hotly debated but ironically the most ignored issue is of generating adequate interest in and motivation for learning among the modern day students. Despite the fact that today everyone is keen to opt for higher education; the teaching-learning process in higher education seems to be legging behind the ideal. As the heterogeneous classroom fraternity in a typical higher education classroom presents a challenge to the

teacher, the indispensable prerequisite of effective teaching-learning process – *students'/participants' motivation/interest to learn*; is not given due attention. Considering the diversity amongst these students, one cannot expect to have a standardized across-the-board approach to deal with all the motivational problems. This was also highlighted by Bligh (1971) and Sass (1989) when they reported that there is no single magical formula for motivating students. Many factors affect student's motivation to learn including interest in the subject matter, perception of its usefulness, general desire to achieve, self-confidence and self-esteem, as well as patience and persistence. Both the researchers further added that a teacher should always keep in mind that all students are not motivated by the same values, needs, desires, or wants.

This is even more prevalent in a management degree programme classroom, as the career aspirants – budding management graduates coming from diversified educational and cultural backgrounds expect the management institutions and teachers to serve as the 'Catalyst' for transforming them into managerial talents (Thakkar, 2015). But, the success of this entire transformation process largely depends on the effectiveness of the teaching-learning process adopted by the management teachers to shape these young minds; which in turn depends and/or determines on the students' motivation and interest to learn.

Further, if we don't talk about the ironical mushrooming growth of low-quality management institutions in the last decade, the top bracket hi-quality management institutions are still doing wonders. Probably due to the credibility of a management degree from such premier institutions, today everyone seems to be keen to go for management degree/education hoping to improve his/her career prospects. In this ever-competitive and highly turbulent era, one may consider it as a fashion/trend or a necessity or an avoidable irritant, but the fact is that the Management Education is something that each and every student aspires for (Kumaresan, Balamurugan, & Thirunavukkarasu, 2012).

Now, when these career aspirants get into the management degree programme of these premier management institutions by crossing the hurdles of a stringent 3 layer selection process consisting of an Aptitude Test, Group Discussion and Personal Interview, usually one would expect these budding managers – the Gen-Next management students to be highly motivated, ambitious, full of zeal and enthusiasm; owing to their career orientation.

But, the reality is far away from the ideal expectations. Just after crossing the initial days of the typical *'tourist or honeymoon phase'*; when these Gen-Next students – the career aspirants with high energy levels and enthusiasm – start going through the day-to-day teaching-learning process; they seem to face motivation problems! This is ironical as well as unpalatable, as after carefully reviewing all career options, one chooses to pursue management education, and suddenly the motivation level vanishes or at least comes down and consequently the teaching-learning process is adversely affected. The absence of student motivation starts causing day-to-day instructional problems for the teachers and in turn creates stumbling blocks for the overall development of the students. As Mamoria & Gankar (2006) pointed out, an adequate interest in and motive for; learning are essential because people are goal-oriented and most learning is self-motivated. This was also supported by Williams & Williams in their pioneering work titled as "Five key ingredients for improving student motivation". Here they noted that motivation is probably the most important factor that educators can target in order to improve learning.

With reference to management education, this becomes even more important as continuous active involvement of the students is required in variety of teaching methodologies like Role Playing, Case Study Analysis and Discussions, Presentations, *etc.* in addition to regular Interactive Sessions. The rationale for ensuring student motivation also takes on importance as most of the times; the difference between achievers and non-achievers is only the presence or lack of

motivation. Most students are good, intelligent and even capable of shining out with the best of their efforts. But, the missing link between their capabilities and willingness to exert efforts is the much needed spark of motivation. They need to be boosted from within and inner urge should be ignited, as George (2009) quotes *"without motivation, there is no learning, no actions, no change and consequently no results"*.

Some students may be naturally enthusiastic about learning, but many need or expect the teachers to inspire, challenge, and stimulate them. As rightly noted way back by Ericksen (1978) that effective learning in the classroom depends on the teacher's ability to maintain the interest that brought students to the course in the first place.

Then, why these Gen-Next Management students, seemingly more aware, career conscious as well as enthusiastic, face motivational problems? Where the shoe pinches? What are the daunting blocks to ensuring student motivation in management education? What can be done to improve the teaching-learning process by overcoming the instructional problems arising out of absence of student motivation; to make it more fruitful to all the concerned?

There are no simple 'black and white' answers to all these questions as motivation itself is a very complex 'grey' psychological process. But, considering the high felt need of active involvement and participation of students is for effective teaching-learning process in any discipline; this conceptual paper attempts to unearth the basic concern areas for ensuring student motivation and provides broad guidelines for ensuring the same.

Thus, the objectives of present conceptual paper are

- To study and analyze the basic ingredients of students' motivation process.

- To identify the causes/reasons of lower or lack of student motivation in management education.

- To highlight the role of a teacher as a motivator, and

- To suggest remedial measures to ignite and ensure student motivation and thereby improve teaching-learning process in higher education in general and management education in particular.

The principal author, being an accomplished State, National & International Awards Winner Trainer since 15+ years and a passionate Full Time Management Faculty Member since 12+ years by now, and the co-author being an accomplished counselor since last 10+ years, have discussed the implications for educators, especially for the management faculty members to serve as motivators for the 'would be managers' sort of management students; and thereby improve the teaching-learning process.

Why Motivational Problems among Management Students

Before we dig out the reasons/causes of lower or in worst case complete absence of motivation among these students, let's understand the basics of student motivation process.

Motivation refers to *"the reasons underlying behavior"* (Guay, et al., 2010).

Conceptually, the term "Motivation" is defined as *"the process that account for an individual's intensity, direction, and persistence of effort toward attaining a goal."* Thus, student motivation is a process that considers the student's intensity, direction and persistence of effort toward the study/course. So, motivation of students seems to be centered around three key elements namely,

- **Intensity:** refers to the degree/extent to which the student is passionate about the study/course. How hard he/she tries to achieve the desired results. This is the most frequently quoted element when teachers or anyone else for that sake, discuss about student motivation.

- **Direction:** refers to the quality of efforts as well as the channel/direction wherein the students' efforts are being directed.

- **Persistence:** refers to the firmness of efforts put in by the student. As we all know, everyday is not going to be our day. So, whatsoever may be the day-to-day experiences – positive or negative, how long the student can maintain his/her effort toward the study/course, is an indication of persistence of efforts.

Further, we must understand and appreciate the fact that even though individuals differ in their basic motivational drive based on intensity, direction and persistence attributes of their efforts; motivation is the result of interaction of the individual and the situation (Robbins & Sanghi, 2006).

E.g. the same student who finds it difficult to seat quietly in the classroom and concentrate may watch his/her favorite movie continuously for 6 hours (with a repeat watch) or a cricket match for a whole day (even with the highlights of the same game)! Here, for this student, the change in motivation is driven by the situation.

In nutshell, when we think of motivating students, we must concentrate on the intensity, direction, persistence as well as the favorableness or unfavorableness of the situation – quite often referred to as the 'opportunity factors' in the whole phenomenon of motivation. This is an area when the management institutions overall academic and learning ambience play a dominant role.

Considering this conceptual framework, one can easily understand that if any of these three key elements – *intensity, direction and persistence* – is low or absent; the student is bound to face motivational problem. The question here to ponder is why these students would have lower intensity &/or why they choose wrong direction &/or why they can't be persistent.

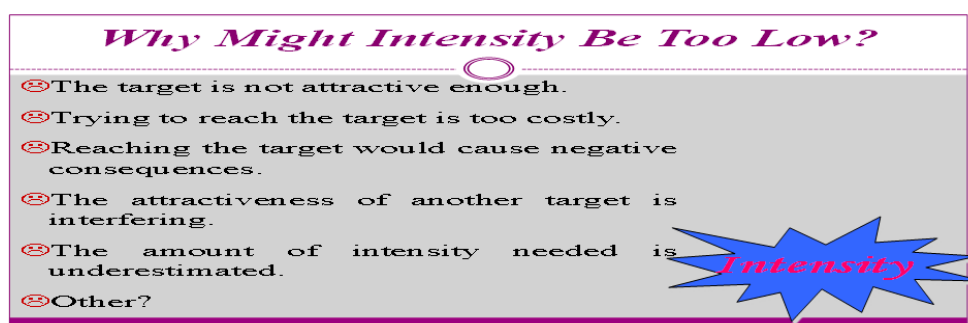**Reasons for Lower Intensity**

Figure 1: Reasons for Lower Intensity of Management Students

- **The Target is Not Attractive Enough:** 10 years back, securing admission in management programme was itself a big deal. But, ironically with mushrooming growth of "me too" sort of "so called" management institutions in the last decade; except few reputed and real quality institutions, most of these institutions lack in terms of sufficient learning and academic infrastructure, expert & experienced faculty members having industry exposure, continuous industry-academia interaction opportunities, *etc.* Consequently, students only get the degree without

any real value-addition and transformation into managerial talents; ultimately adversely affecting their 'employability'. Added to this, the biggest problem with this unplanned growth of management institutions is the issue of wide disparity between the demand and supply of competent management professionals. Gone are the days, when organizations were dying hard to recruit a candidate with management qualification. Today, they also focus on RoI of selecting a management student. So, most of these management institutions face the problem of placement of their students. With all these, the target of pursuing a management programme has lost its *'snob appeal'*. And this is possibly the biggest reason why students are not very passionate about their study/course.

- **Trying to Reach the Target is too Costly**: Yes, with privatization of higher education, almost 85% institutions are run on self financed mode, making the management education very costly.

- **Reaching the Target would cause Negative Consequences**: This is pretty interesting. Some students are not pursuing management degree because they really want to go for it. They are there because their parents want them there, particularly in case of well established business families or rich families. So, this bunch of students always try to make sure that by mistake also, they do not score good results, otherwise their parents would force them to study further. An odd score with negative remark certainly means the parents themselves will allow him/her to be at home or do whatever he/she likes.

- **The Attractiveness of another Target is Interfering:** These modern day students do have several other issues like continuously updating their status and profile on social networking sites or chatting/gossiping with their 'so called' friends or managing their love affairs; which constantly make the study/course a bit unattractive.

- **The Amount of Intensity is Underestimated**: Owing to filtered and wrong information from the peer group, quite often, these students underestimate the amount of intensity needed to successfully pursue a management degree. They do not understand the fact that after going through rigorous training in management education, the society expects a lot of things from them, and living up to those expectations is not that easy. Here, the senior students mostly fail to serve as the much needed role models in positive terms.

- **Other Issues:** In some cases, problems related to personal health and hygiene, family issues, demoralizing classroom politics, hostel environment, *etc.* may have an adverse effect on their intensity.
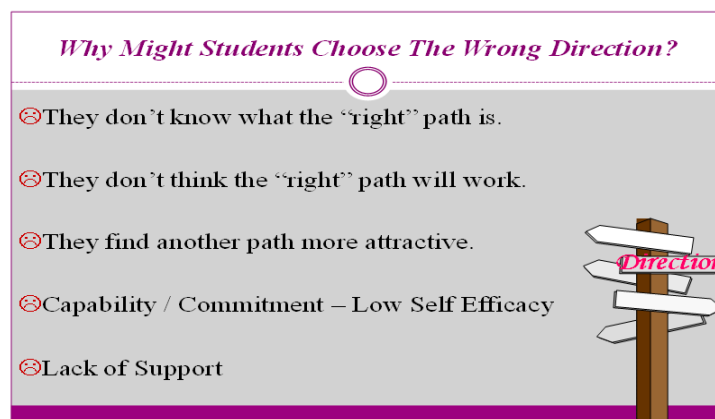
Reasons for Wrong Direction

Figure 2: Reasons for Choosing the Wrong Direction by Management Students

- **They don't know what the "right" path is**: Lack of relevant information due to less experienced faculty members or absence of real mentors/counselors to guide in career matters, leads to such situation where these students are ill-informed. What are the standard references, what are the other relevant resources, from where to procure/access these resources, what sort of efforts are required to improve their employability – these are confusing questions to them and ultimately they are totally unaware about the right path to follow.

- **They don't think the "right" path will work**: Owing to filtered and wrong information coupled with a pinch of overconfidence, at times, these students don't believe in the 'right' path also. e.g. If someone guides them that they should refer foreign author book &/or reputed journals for preparing their presentations, they just don't think that it would work. Based on selective information from friends, they resort to shortcuts.

- **They find another path more attractive**: Due to lack of proper information, many students take the concept of "SMART Work" as a short cut, and leave the time-tested concept of "Hard Work". And, initially, they find it easy and attractive also. Instead of going through the pile of books and journals, they simply add or modify or in worst case copy and paste whatever is available on internet, without bothering about its relevance.

- **Capability/Commitment – Low Self Efficacy**: With lower self efficacy, some students have self doubts about their own capabilities, leading to lowering down their commitment to the right path/direction of efforts.

- **Lack of Support**: One of the 'opportunity factors' making the situation unfavorable for the student is the perceived lack of support in the immediate environment. If the classmates are not supportive, the faculty member keeps on becoming judgmental and keeps on criticizing, the institutional system is rigid – all these can negatively affect the willingness to focus one's efforts in the right direction.

Reasons for Not Being Persistent

Figure 3: Reasons for Lower Persistency of Management Students

- **Low Self Efficacy**: Self Efficacy refers to *'self perceived competence.'* It is the degree/extent to which the student believes that he/she can do a particular thing or not. Bandura (1982) defines perceived self-efficacy as *"judgments of how well one can execute courses of action required to deal with prospective situations"*. In the opinion of Eccles and Wigfield (2002), self-efficacy is an individual's confidence in his or her "ability to organize and execute a given course of action to solve a problem or accomplish a task". With low self efficacy, the students easily lose their confidence in situations where their efforts don't produce the desired results. They tend to get

frustrated very soon and then start getting alienated from the study/course.

- **Support:** As indicated earlier, the perceived presence or lack of support in the immediate environment matters a lot.

- **Other issues**: There might be some other issues deep down the consciousness. These can be known when the students start operating at a higher maturity level and openly share his/her thoughts with the faculty members. But, this depends to a great extent on what sort of image the faculty enjoys in the students' eyes.

Strategies to Ensure Student Motivation

Improving the teaching-learning process by ensuring student motivation in management education requires acknowledging the views of Biehler and Snowman (1993) that motivation typically comes from within a person; meaning thereby that student motivation is a highly individualistic personalized, psychological and intrinsic process. Hence, teachers' and institutions' responsibility is to create the conditions that will enhance students' motivation to pursue academic and career goals actively.

Here, as Brennen (2012) puts, the teachers have a big role to play in the entire process of ensuring student motivation. They are the most active and irreplaceable component of this trio – *Student, Teacher and the Education System including Institutional Framework.* Referring to Abraham H. Maslow's famous Need Hierarchy theory, he noted that in addition to satisfying all the basic needs, teachers are in a key position to enhance students' self-esteem by creating classroom conditions that will increase their sense of achievement.

Even Chapman & Vagle (2010) in their pioneering book entitled *"Motivating Students – 25 Strategies to Light the Fire of Engagement"* highlighted the teacher's role in ensuring both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation for reengaging frustrated students by finding the source of disengagement.

So, where does the role of management teacher lies in the motivation framework encompassing intensity, direction and persistence of efforts? Let's explore the same with the help of Figure 4.
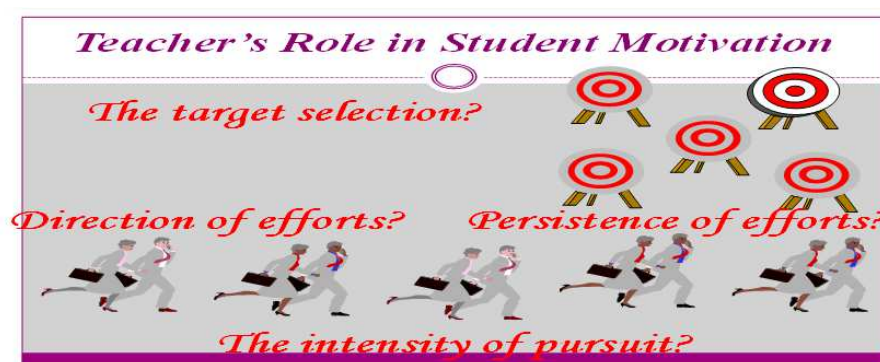

Figure 4: Teacher's Role in Motivating Management Students

Thus, the faculty members can help the management student in selecting the target by providing counseling for setting the goal for academic performance, choosing the right specialization, becoming the member of professional associations/bodies, appearing/participating in competitive exams/competitions related to their field, choosing the right sector &/or job profile matching with skill-sets, interests, personality aspects, *etc.* Even, they can guide the students about the emerging business scenario across the globe, the highly demanded skill-sets, the corporate expectations, *etc.*, which

will enable them to rightly estimate the amount of intensity needed. Based on their own experiences, the faculty members should also advise about the right direction of efforts in terms of preparing notes, note taking during the session, information about career development resources and opportunities available, time management, *etc.* Above all, they should serve as the real helping hand – a friend, philosopher, guide and a mentor – for the students, so that they can have the much needed psychological back-up as and when the situation doesn't turn out to be in their favor. In this ever demanding and highly competitive era, such circumstances may arise wherein they might feel frustrated, depressed, demeaned, defeated; but with continuous psychological support, they will never think of leaving the ground and will certainly bounce back with rigorous efforts.

As such, there is no "one size fits all" standardized framework for motivating the students because the law of individual differences will certainly play a major role owing to the diversity in terms of their socio-cultural background, family atmosphere, parental guidance, IQ and several other such factors. However, based on the careful review of published theoretical literature on motivation and first-hand rich experience of both the authors as accomplished freelance trainers and passionate teachers, following broad guidelines can be prescribed for ensuring the motivation of management students; for achieving the desired improvements in the teaching-learning process.

- **Using Case Study Method**

Acc. to Ahuja (2011), motivation of the learners and consequently the effectiveness are highly dependent upon the teaching methodology adopted by the faculty in the class. The most widely used and equally widely criticized traditional method of 'lecturing'; being a teacher-centered methodology; has to be shifted to a student/learner-centered methodology. Johansson (2010) also reported the same fact when he observed that students usually think that "teacher talking" is a good way to learn; but not a good way to make the topic/subject interesting and motivational. The implications are very clear. But, this much needed shift of teaching methodology from teacher-centered to student/learner-centered has been a major challenge in tackling the concern areas of management education now-a-days (Dayal, 2002). The management faculty members should emphasize on 'experiential learning' instead of merely spoon-feeding to their students, as experiential learning pose stimulating challenges to the existing knowledge, skills and beliefs of the students (Keys & Wolfe, 1988) and therefore motivates them to explore more, at a quicker pace with zeal and enthusiasm. Several research studies (Mabey & Thomson, 2000; Thompson, 2000) reported that management students indicated high regard for 'case study & discussion' method, as a critical component for creating a good MBA course. Cinneide (1997) rightly pointed out that the use of relevant cases as a part of teaching methodology encourage active involvement as well as a feeling of 'self empowerment' among the management students and thus becomes more motivating, interesting and challenging one. So, the teaching methodology should focus on active and reflective learning by de-emphasizing lectures and using more cases. This will not only help to arouse adequate interest in and motivation for learning; but would also ensure transfer of required knowledge and skills to the real world (Rai, 2009).

- **Incorporating Learning Principles**

Effective teaching causes learning, a process that take place within, in which behavioural changes occur as a result of classroom experience. Considering this, the faculty member should ensure to incorporate the following learning principles while dealing with students and classroom management skills. These principles, based on firmly rooted educational and psychological aspects, can certainly go a long way to combat issues related to student motivation.

- Conveying his/her belief of every student being capable to learn leading to 'Self Fulfilling Prophecy' on the part of students;

- Ensuring equitable treating to all;

- Expecting, Recognizing, Accepting, Respecting and Appreciating that 'everyone is unique' and individual differences exist in learning pace, style, comfort zone, etc;

- Providing enough practice opportunities to enable the student to digest what has been imparted;

- Practicing positive reinforcement strategies;

- Providing specific, prompt, precise, diagnostic and non-judgmental feedback;

- Presenting the material in meaningful, logical manner;

- Taking care of active learning by focusing on all three types of learning - cognitive, affective and psychomotor learning;

- Experimenting with the teaching styles to match the students' learning styles; and

- Ensuring multi-sensory involvement of students through variety of teaching aids and pedagogical techniques.

- **Pedagogy-Andragogy-Synergogy Approach to Teaching**

The management students are adult ones and the faculty members must understand that adult learning pattern is quite different than that of child or adolescent. Here, they should shift from the traditional 'Pedagogy' to 'Andragogy' to 'Synergogy' approach of teaching. In pedagogic approach, the teachers serve as experts who know everything and the students merely passive listeners knowing nothing. This induces compliance and obedience at the cost of student involvement, motivation and interest to learn. The 'andragogic approach', wherein the teachers serve as facilitators who knows everything treating the students as knowing something, encourages involvement but it also leads to dependence of the students on the teacher for social context and emotional safety (Singh, 2006) – crucial ingredients for arousing adequate interest and motivation to learn. So, as a perfect remedy to improve teaching effectiveness by ensuring management students' motivation, synergogy approach overcomes the weaknesses of both the earlier approaches while preserving their strengths. The synergogy approach increases accountability on the part of both – the teachers and the students. On one hand, it recognizes the role of teachers as experts responsible for providing cutting-edge updated authoritative subject matter, and on the other, it requires proactive involvement of the learners in being responsible for own learning. Students learn by doing, making, writing, designing, creating, solving. Passivity dampens students' motivation and curiosity. Instead of telling students something, teachers should ask them. This will stimulate their thought processes and they would feel involved, empowered and motivated also (Lucas, 1990). Supporting this notion through empirical research, Hanrahan (1998) also advocated the concept of more choice and more voice for students by validating the importance of giving all students the chance to be involved personally, whether in small-group learning, personal research projects or class discussion. This leads to fruitful dialogue session instead of monologues that jeopardizes the interest and motivation to learn.

- **Emphasizing Mastery Oriented Behaviour Instead of Marks/Grades Oriented Behaviour**

The pioneering findings reported by Ames and Ames (1990) based on the study of two secondary school teachers, and several other researchers (Cashin, 1979; Forsyth & McMillan, 1991; Lowman, 1984 & 1990) recommend de-emphasizing grading by eliminating complex systems of credit points; and avoiding use of grades/marks/scores to control nonacademic behavior. In a sense, there is a need to shift the focus of students from *"Performance or Marks Orientation Behaviour"* to *"Mastery or Learning Oriented Behaviour"* for ensuring long term success (Svinicki, 2005). This much needed shifting of students' orientation from a short term perspective on marks/grades/scores to long term retention of learned inputs and developing mastery over the subject domain has been dealt at length in the pioneering work of Pintrich and Schunk (2002).

- **Identifying Learner Types and Teaching with Variety**

Each of the students is different as a learner and identifying their learning styles is very much necessary. A very promising feature in management degree classrooms is that irrespective of gender, cast, creed, age, region/domicile, etc.; a heterogeneous group of career aspirants rush to management institutes to shape their career dreams. And, here comes the real challenge for the faculty members of management programmes – the challenge of identifying the varied learner types and adjust their teaching methodology accordingly to impart the desired inputs. Further, now-a-days, most of the management institutes are equipped with state-of-the art sort of infrastructure matching with global standards of education with a distant vision. So, most of the teaching is facilitated through efficient and effective use of power point presentations and even interesting audio-visuals (Thakkar, 2014). But, I usually find the teachers relying heavily on the power point presentations only. Ideally, considering the learning style preferences of such a heterogeneous group of students, it is essential that the teacher adopts a variety of teaching methods like Chalk-and-Talk, Interesting Self Made Power Point Presentation *(not a one directly taken/downloaded from internet!)*, Role Playing, Case Study, *etc.* This has been emphasized by many researchers (Mcgroarty, 2002; Ruin, 1996; Widdowson, 1991) when they observed that that students benefit from different teaching methodologies.

- **Practicing Counseling-Mentoring in Right Spirit**

Kozminsky and Kozminsky (2002) emphasized that it is important for teachers to have a dialogue with students. Feedback from teachers plays a big part when it comes to success or failure. Mihalas, et al., (2009) also highlighted the link between good relations between teachers and students and students' motivation level. It is good to see that realizing the crucial role of counseling-mentoring activities; many management institutes have started the same. But, ironically, most of the faculty members consider this as an avoidable irritant. Even in some institutes, the counselor/mentor comes up with terrifying web of rules and regulations, which further frustrates the students. Instead of this, a healthy attitude must be developed among the faculty members regarding the importance of counseling-mentoring activities and a systematic approach to counseling-mentoring activity must be there. Enough care must be taken to ensure that counseling should relieve the students from unnecessary anxiety/worries instead of increasing their troubles; and at the same time, it should not be only for 'ornamental value'. If such activities are not implemented in the right spirit, it further erodes the motivation and morale of the students.

- **Proper Diagnosis of the Non-Performers**

Management teachers should accurately diagnose the cases of underperforming students. They should stay away

from adopting layman mentality to jump on vague conclusions or relying on jaundiced perception that underperformance/failure is only due to lack of ability. They should be broad minded enough to understand that performance is actually the result of interaction among motivation, ability and opportunity factors. So, diagnosing the situation well will help to do the 'root cause analysis' and assist the underperformers to improve by overcoming their weaknesses; as underperformance may be a result of lack of ability or lack of interest and motivation or may be due to opportunity factors. For this, it is essential to develop a close rapport with the students by talking, listening to them, and picking up cues about their needs/desires/problems from verbal/non verbal reactions.

- **Encouraging Peer Learning**

Since peer relationships are an important source of support, companionship, and social development for this age-group students, the management teachers should encourage peer learning or cooperative learning as an effective method for meeting students' varied learning styles and fostering involvement in the teaching-learning process. However, the faculty member should ensure that all students do their share of work in a group assignment/project.

- **Empowering the Students**

The management students are no longer small children. Hence, the faculty member should allow them to take responsibility for own learning by focusing on their interests and goals. They should be allowed to make choices. Even, they should be engaged in the process of self-evaluation, while maintaining a certain amount of control. This will foster a feeling of empowerment and will boost their self esteem. The findings of the Pearson Research Report on Motivation as reported by Lai (2011) also noted that teachers should attempt to give students more autonomy or control over their own learning by allowing them to make choices and use collaborative or cooperative learning approaches. For example, I usually allow my students to decide the syllabus content, paper style and even the dates for hourly/internal/unit/class tests, the assignment submission deadlines, the presentation schedules, *etc.*

- **Joyful Learning**

An innovative way to motivate your students is to consider making the *classroom more attractive and interesting*!!! Eventual surprises can create conducive learning environment and bring back life to a stagnant classroom ambience. The teacher should try to implement 'learning with fun' concept by keeping the classroom environment fun. This doesn't mean that the study/work doesn't get done, just that it's enjoyable/joyful to be there. For example, I occasionally conduct lectures on terrace of the college building, in corridor, canteen, beautiful landscaping garden of our college, *etc.* Such 3-4 classes in a semester serve the purpose of transforming the seemingly boring teaching-learning process into a much more enjoyable one.

- **Management by Wondering Around – Mbwa**

Make an effort to catch the students doing something right and reward them; and if they do something wrong, guide and coach them. Don't scold. Here, the faculty members must understand that they can't catch someone doing something right if they remain busy with their laptops in their cabins. So, they should practice *Management By Wondering Around – MBWA.* They should go to canteen area, should occasionally travel by the public transport/college buses through which most of the students travel, should enthusiastically participate in freshers' party, academic tour, industrial visits, sports, *etc.*

- **Career Counseling**

Yes, it is not only the responsibility of the Training & Placement Cell to guide the students about their careers. Every faculty member should provide career counseling service to the students. They should question students about their personal vocational goals, mission and vision of career and life, and explain them about the personal benefits from having marketable job related skills. This will certainly make them feel that they are getting something extra beyond the syllabus and may feel 'value addition' as well. But, for this, even the faculty members need to undergo thorough training to serve as the "career counselor".

- **Developing Personalized Relationship**

Yes, as McMahon (2007) puts, make the whole learning experience more personalized. The faculty members should develop one-to-one relationship with the students as knowing the students and showing interest in them certainly make them more interested in the teaching-learning process, and allow them to feel as an integral part of the class. Quite often, classroom sessions turn out to be impersonal meetings where students feel bored and pay little attention. Trying to make them more personal can greatly enhance the satisfaction, motivation and commitment of these students (Dimitra, 2001). Shrivastava (2012) also substantiated this fact that many potential problems in teaching can easily be addressed by simply getting to know something about the students. A very simple thing like remembering the students' names and calling them by their names can create wonders. For example, I always address my students using their names when asking questions. Use of names can have a galvanizing effect on the whole classroom environment. I even regularly organize and strongly recommend such contests on Teachers' Day or Guru Purnima Divas, wherein the teachers need to recall and write the names and other details of the students. The one, who knows, recalls and writes more about his/her students becomes the winner.

Moreover, the faculty members should continuously try to find out why the students are in the class and what they are interested in. The faculty member's ability to pick up clues and adjust the pace and content of the class to meet students' needs can greatly enhance the motivation and morale of the students. This will even help the teacher to incorporate incidental humor and some out of the syllabi discussion to increase their attention span by breaking the monotony. For example, I usually spend initial 3-5 minutes of my every classroom lecture talking about the recently completed cricket match or a recently released movie or some latest happenings. This 3-5 minutes builds the tempo and sets the rhythm for the rest of 55 minutes.

In short, taking interest in the modern day management students can be very satisfying for both – the faculty members as well as the students. While such interest in a student itself can be motivating for a student, but for a faculty member, knowledge about the students plays an important role in avoidance of problems and carrying out correct diagnosis of the problems when they occur. However, in an effort to develop close relationship, the faculty member should not provide unsolicited help in easy tasks because low achievers perceive this behavior as a cue to their low ability. This in turn lessens their efforts in performing a task; and thereby affecting their motivation and morale (Wentzel, 1997).

- **Maintaining Balance between Carrot and Stick**

While using positive reinforcement has its own value, the management faculty member should maintain a balance between the 'carrot and stick'. It means that the students must be aware and accepting the fact that the faculty member has the authority to expel him/her from the class or even the exam; but ideally the faculty member should make sure that such

need never arises (McMahon, 2007). A perfect blend of positive reinforcement strategies (the carrot) and negative reinforcement strategies (the stick) would ensure that the students would willingly come to the class with zeal and enthusiasm to contribute to the discussions and learn, and at the same time, they will not take it for granted also. This can certainly combat cases of higher absenteeism or unnecessary disruption in the sessions. However McKeachie (1986) pointed out that the threat of low grades may prompt some students to work hard, but other students may resort to academic dishonesty, excuses for late work, and other counterproductive behavior; and hence negative reinforcements should be avoided.

- **Quality Matter the Most**

Above all, the most important thing is to deliver quality content in the most engaging style. If you are imparting quality contents in the most amazing, unique and inimitable style, believe me, you would never face the issue of less attendance in your lectures – not even in extra lectures. But, if you fail to do so, I can guarantee you that howsoever strict the attendance norms may be; you would always be bothered about students' higher absenteeism and even mass bunking. We are living in the information era, and if the management faculty members only serve as the information passers, the students are less likely to attend lectures. He/she would better find it on internet at his/her convenience and would enjoy self paced learning, and gradually feel alienated from the class, teacher and subject as well. So, better be quality conscious.

CONCLUSIONS

Revamping the Indian higher education system – the 3rd largest in the world after USA and China; would certainly require thorough planning and action steps from all the concerned. But, the most active, irreplaceable and influential component of this system – the teachers – should rise as the "torch bearers" and strive hard to overcome the daunting issues of modern day higher education system in India. One such ignored issue of ensuring student motivation also needs to be tackled effectively for the ultimate improvement of the teaching-learning process. The faculty members should take on the responsibility and serve as the real motivator, as "if a student has failed to learn, the teacher has failed to teach". So, real "Gurus" – the teachers involved in higher education and the faculty members of management programmes should get ready and equip themselves with the behavioural dynamics of human nature to serve as the motivator for the students. If required, the faculty members should not hesitate in undergoing systematic training on "Art of Being Effective Teacher", "Overcoming Instructional Problems – Classroom Management", "Ensuring Student Motivation – A Key Element for Effective Teaching", "Identifying Learner Types and Incorporating Innovative-Effective Adaptive Teaching Methods", "Practicing Teaching without Lecturing", "Facilitating Experiential Learning", etc. All The Best to all the GURUs to Beat The Best by tapping the hidden talents of the young guns sitting in the class…no matter where they are seating…may be on the first or last bench…The Youngistan – the future of the "Youngest Nation of the World" is eagerly awaiting for your wholehearted action on this front Go Ahead

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